

The chapter comparing the flora with that of Holland induces one to wish that this had been carried further, so little of such work has been attempted in British local floras. Being the work of the late Dr. Babington, Dr. Hind probably did right in so leaving it; none the less it is to be regretted. One plant, however, stated to be absent from Holland *is not so*, i. e. *Peucedanum palustre*, Mœnch., but occurs in many parts abundantly; doubtless the slip has occurred from the Dutch botanists putting it under the genus *Thysselinium*, Hoffm.; had it been absent it would have been a remarkable fact in distribution. *Arenaria leptoclados* and *Galium Vaillantii* are also Dutch species.

The chapter on "The Progress of Botanical Study in Suffolk" contains much interesting matter and satisfactorily concludes the work.

The writer would suggest that if a new edition is at any time undertaken a careful examination should be made of the material at Kew, in Smith's and Winch's herbaria at the Linnean Society, and in the British herbarium at the Natural-History Museum at Kensington; in the first two there certainly is additional matter, and though very time-consuming, the want, if known, may be filled by some one. In these matters we miss that kind and ever-helpful botanist the late Rev. W. W. Newbould.

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The Fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma. Published under the Authority of the Secretary of State for India in Council. Edited by W. T. BLANFORD. *Birds.*—Vol. I. By EUGENE W. OATES. London: Taylor and Francis.

In his able Preface the Editor of this series justly congratulates Indian ornithologists upon the acquisition of the services of the author of 'The Birds of Burmah,' a work which, from the excellence of its letterpress, deserves to be bracketed with Col. Legge's 'Birds of Ceylon.' From the scientific point of view the present volume and the two which are to follow will supersede the well-known and classic Jerdon, although many old Indians, who care little for classification, will continue to dwell with pleasure on the badly-printed pages from which they received their earliest lessons in bird-lore. In this they will be justified by the fact that Jerdon's work contains more ample notes on migration, habits, folk-lore, &c. than will be found in Mr. Oates's book, owing to the limits assigned by the authorities to the number and size of the volumes which make up this series. When we consider that the sum total of species enumerated by Jerdon will be exceeded in the present work by more than one half, the necessity for compression by the author will be obvious. The increase is largely due to the extension of the area now comprised in British India, but also to the number of additional species that have been recorded from localities which were little known in Jerdon's time, when such collections as those now in the

British Museum—the Hume, Tweeddale, and other representative series—were undreamt of.

In this instalment, which contains a great part of the Acromyodian Passeres, the arrangement of the families is new and to some extent based upon the plumage of the young birds, a character of unquestionable value as evidence of relationship. Mr. Oates begins with the Corvidæ, which he divides into three subfamilies—Corvinæ, Parinæ (Tits), and Paradoxornithinæ; and the position of the second will come as a shock to a good many old-fashioned systematists. While we think of it we may note, for correction in the errata, a slip of the pen on p. 16, line 19, where “eastwards” should be “westwards.” Wisely, as we think, Mr. Oates has retained the Jackdaw in the genus *Corvus*, and has not placed it under *Colæus*: but, having done this, it seems inconsistent to put the Red-billed and the Yellow-billed Choughs each in a different genus, solely on account of the shape of their beaks. In the Paradoxornithinæ he makes a new genus, *Scorhynchus* (p. 68). The next family—Crateropodidæ—contains *Rhopocichla* (p. 159), *Sittiparus* (p. 171), *Lioparus* (p. 174), *Hilarocichla* (p. 243), *Alophoixus* (p. 259), and *Xanthixus* (p. 274), gg. nn.; while we gather that *Criniger burmanicus* and *Molpastes humii* are here distinguished specifically for the first time, though no “sp. n.” is inserted to catch the eye of the Recorder of Aves. In the Dicuridæ *Dissemurulus*, in the Certhiidæ *Elachura*, are gg. nn.; *Regulus* is raised to the rank of a family; the Sylviidæ, Laniidæ, Oriolidæ, Eulabetidæ, and Sturnidæ follow, and in the last there is a new genus, *Agropsar*. Woodcuts of the typical species or of their heads and feet add to the value of this carefully-written volume, which will for a long time hold its place as the standard work on Indian ornithology.

We would suggest that in the succeeding volumes a little more system with regard to proper names is desirable. As a rule, when we find simply Blyth, Jerdon, Anderson, or Stolickza, we understand that those naturalists are dead; but here, although Col. Godwin-Austen, Dr. Scully, Messrs. Hume, Blanford, Davison, and many others are happily still among us, their names seldom, if ever, have a prefix. In fact Col. Lloyd, Dr. Stewart (dead, we believe), Mr. Gammie, and Mr. Bligh are among the few thus distinguished; and, remembering the wrath-appeasing reply of the subaltern to Lord Gough—“Sir, we never say *General* Alexander or *General* Cæsar”—this exceptional and distant politeness seems somewhat invidious.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mimicry of the Environment in Pterophryne histrio.

By Mr. J. E. IVES.

THE author stated that his attention had been drawn to the remarkable resemblance of the colour-markings of the Frog-fish to the Sargassum weed in which it lives. This fish is a member of the